

A DELL
MAGAZINE

MAY-JUNE

GENE AUTRY

COMICS



The COWBOY'S Clothes

THE COWBOY'S COLORFUL COSTUME DIDN'T JUST "HAPPEN" EACH ARTICLE WAS DESIGNED TO PLAY A NECESSARY PART IN HIS ROUGH-DRIVING LIFE ON THE WESTERN PLAINS.

HIS HAT IS WIDE-BRIMMED TO PROTECT HIM FROM THE SCORCHING SUNS AND THE DRIVING RAINS OF THE OPEN RANGE.

ALSO THE HAT CAN BE A DRINKING CUP FOR HIM OR A RATTLESNAIL PAUL AND FEED BAG FOR HIS CONSTANT COMPANION, HIS HORSE.

HIS BAY NECKERCHIEF IS BOTH A TOWEL AND A MASK. TIED AROUND HIS NECK AND MOUTH, IT SHIELDS HIM FROM THE CHOKING DUST AND THE SMOKES OF COOKING AND BRANDING FIRES.

CONTINUED
ON INSIDE
BACK COVER...

Gene Autry

In
THE MYSTERY
of the
RAFTER-M

GUNSHOTS! COMIN'
FROM THAT RANCH
DOWN THERE!



LET'S SEE WHAT'S UP,
CHAMP!



LOOKS LIKE THAT HORSE BEHIND THE
WOODPILE IS IN PLENTY TROUBLE!



IT'S A HOLDUP! THOSE AGERS ARE
MASKED!



WHAT-EE... I WHERED THAT
SHOT COME FROM?

LOOK, SLATS!
A RIDER HEADING
THIS WAY!





MY OLD FRIEND, ED MARTIN, WROTE ME! HE DIDN'T SAY MUCH, JUST ASKED ME TO COME, PRONTO! I'VE BEEN RIDIN' FOR DAYS!



I WAS ON MY WAY TO HIS PLACE, THE "BAPTIST-M", WHEN I HEARD THE SHOOTIN'!

THERE'S NO HURRY, AUNTIE! YOU WON'T FIND ED AT THE "BAPTIST-M"!



HE WAS MURDERED LAST SATURDAY NIGHT! THE FUNERAL WAS YESTERDAY!



ED MARTIN KILLED? ANY IDEA WHO DID IT?

YEAH! JASON DOBIE'S GUN SLINGERS! THEY'RE THE SAME ONES AS SHOT LEM GRAY IN SAN SMITH, TWO OTHER RANCHERS!



WHO'S THIS JASON DOBIE, WORKS? AN OUTLAW?

NO! HE'S A Slick-TALKIN' VARMINT WITH PLENTY O' CASH AN' NO REGULAR BUSINESS!



WE DROPPED INTO SAGE CITY COULDA HIGHTS ABO, WITH A BUNCH O' HARD-RIDIN' HORSEES WEARIN' LOWDOWN SLURS!



THEN A GAVE I JUSTIN AN' HOLDERS WIT THE VALLEY ED DOBIE STARTED AN' RANCHERS PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION!



(H BEGGIN' TO SAVVY) FOR A
RAT FEE, DORR PROTECTS THE
MEMBERS AGAINST RUSTLERS
AN' OUTLAWS WHO ARE PROBABLY
ON HIS PAYROLL!



RIGHT! AN' IF YOU DON'T PAY, YOU END UP IN THE
CEMETERY! ESS KILLIN' MAKES THE THIRD
THIS MONTH!



DOES DORR TRY TO GET HOLD OF THE
RANCHES AFTER THE OWNERS
ARE KILLED?

SURE! LEMS WIDOW SOLD
HIM HER PLACE CHEAP! BUT
MRS SMITHS BOYIN' HIM
PROTECTION!



ES NAHNT MARRIED? WONDER WHO'LL
INHERIT HIS SPREAD?

DAVE NOLAN, HIS FOREMAN, SAID
SOMETHIN' ABOUT A NIECE
COMIN' DOWN FROM PRISCO!



THEN I BETTER GET OVER THERE, FAST! MESSIN'
I CAN SPIKE WHATEVER PLANS DORR HAS FOR
GETTIN' THE 'RAFTER-M'

HERE'S HOPE YOU SPIKE HIM --
PERMANENT!



I WILL -- IF I CAN GET PROOF HE'S
A CROOK!

YOU CAN COUNT ON THE
WHOLE VALLEY TO HELP YOU,
AUFY!



(LATER, LATER)

WONDER IF THOSE RIDERS
UP AHEAD COULD BE
RUBBIN' ON WAYLAIN' US, CHAMP!



THAT'S THE HORSE WHO PUT LEFTY'S GUN
HAND OUT O' BUSINESS, DORR!
I RECOGNIZE HIS HORSE!

GET BACK IN THE TREES, SLATS!
I'D LIKE A GOOD LOOK AT THAT BIRD
WITHOUT HIM SPOTTIN' ME!













THERE'S NO TIME TO EXPLAIN MY PLAN NOW! GET BACK TO THE RANCH AND KEEP YOUR EYES AND EARS OPEN!

IF I SEE A CHANCE, DO YOU WANT ME TO GET RID OF AUTRY?



NO! THAT WOULD BRING THE LAW TO SAGE VALLEY, FULL FORCE! I'LL HANDLE AUTRY IN MY OWN WAY!



SLATS, YOU'VE GOTTA BETTER GET STARTED IF YOU'RE GOING TO REACH SLURPSTON BEFORE THE STAGE!

I'LL GET MY HAT AND COAT!



JAKE! GET THOSE "RAFTER-M" HORSES WITTED TO THE BUCKED RID!

OKAY BOSS!



THAT WAS SHORT, DORN. SMASH THOSE HORSES! THEY OUGHTA CONVINCE THE GAL WE WORK AT THE "RAFTER-M"!



REMEMBER! DON'T HARM THE GIRL! SHE'S OUR INSURANCE FOR A SAFE GETAWAY. IN CASE ANYTHING GOES WRONG!



AT SIX O'CLOCK THAT EVENING - IN SLURPSTON -



THERE'S THE STAGE, DOLLY! KEEP OUTA SIGHT! IF ANYBODY SPOTS YOU

DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! YOU GET HOLD OF HAZEL MARTIN!



THAT'S THE "EASTER" BRAND, ALL RIGHT!



IT STILL DON'T PROVE NOTHIN'! BRANDS'RE EASY TO FAKE!



THAT'S RIGHT! SLATS, I'D LIKE TO TALK TO BEN ALONE!

SURE! COME ALONG, JANE!



WHY DON'T YOU TRUST THOSE MEN, BEN?

WELL, HE WOULDN'T HAVE WOMEN'S LIKE THEM ON HIS OWN BOLL! THEY'RE UP TO NO GOOD!



I SEEN THAT TALL THIN ONE SOME PLACE AFORE -- AN' MIGHTY RECENT, TOO!

I WONDER WHAT YOUR GAME IS! MAYBE I'D BETTER TRY TO FIND OUT!



WHY'RE YOU AININ' TO DO MISS?

GET THEM TO TALKIN'! ONE OF 'EM MIGHT MAKE A SLIP!



WHICH YORE STEPPIN' RECKON I OUGHTA HANG AROUND?

NO! THAT WOULD PUT THEM ON THEIR GUARD!



WELL, HEAVN WHAT'S IT GOIN' TO BE -- THE STAGE OR THE BUCKBOARD?

THE BUCKBOARD -- AFTER I HAVE SUPPER -- INSTAHEAD! WILL YOU JOIN ME?











RECKON THAT DRIVERS LIABLE TO MAKE TROUBLE FOR US, SLATS?

NOH? HE DON'T KNOW US--OR WHERE TO FIND US!



PULL INTO THOSE TREES, JANE! AFTER THE STARS GOES BY WE'LL SWING BACK AN' PICK UP THE MARTIN GEL!



LATER--AT JASON DOBE'S HOE-OUTS.

HOW DO IT GO, SLATS?

OKAY! THE GALE IN THE BACK OF THE WAGON! SHE DUGHTA BE AWAY BY NOW!



CARRY HER INSIDE, JANE! UNTIE HER AND TAKE OFF THE BAG! AND KEEP CLOSE WATCH ON HER!



GET YOUR HORSES, SLATS! WE'LL RIDE TO TOWN AND WATCH DOLLY FOOL THAT SHIRT-LEAK, AUTRY!

BETTER COUNT ME OUT, BOSS!



IF THE OLD DANCE SPOKE HE'S LIABLE TO HOLLER!

WHAT IF?

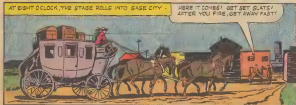


SLATS TELLS DOBE WHAT HAPPENED IN BLURTEN--

--AN THAT'S ALL!

IT'S ENOUGH! IF THAT DRIVER SPILLS HIS SUSPICIONS TO AUTRY, OUR WHOLE SCHEME'S LIABLE TO BLOW UP!





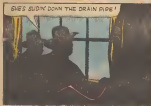














GANG AND THE SHERIFF FOLLOW GENE!

HERE'S THE END O' GENE'S
TRAIL, SHERIFF!

YEAH, AN' THERE'S THE
COYOTES HIDE-OUT! WE'LL
WAIT HERE FOR GENE'S
SIGNAL!



WHAT LUCK! THE WHOLE GANG! I'LL GIVE
THE SIGNAL!



WHO-O-O... WHO-O-O

THAT'S GENE!
LET'S GO!



LET'S CLEAR OUT, JASON! AUNTIE MIGHT BE ON
OUR TAIL, NOW!

WE'LL TAKE CARE O' MISS
MARTIN, FIRST! SHE KNOWS
TOO MUCH TO GO ON LIVING!



BEACH - FOR THE GUY YOU
COLLECTED! NEXT TIME, I'LL
SHOOT MORE THAN A HAND!



AT THE SAME MOMENT,
GANG AND THE SHERIFF
TAKE CARE O' THE
GUARD.



YOUR LITTLE GANG IS ALL OVER FOUNE!



NEXT
ATTENTION!

SORRY YOU CAN'T STAY LONGER, GENE!

WISH I COULD PASS HAZEL! BUT NOW
THAT DONE IN HIS GANG ARE BEHIND
HIM, IS BETTER BE MOVIN' ON!



Gene Autry

and the
NIGHT RIDER

ONE MORNING AT GENE
AUTRY'S RANCH...







SOME TIME LATER GENE AND JOCKO ARRIVE IN ALTA MESA

GUNS MADE GOOD TIME GENE! COLES
INSIDE! SHERIFFS STILL OUT COLD!



CORDIN'TO DOC BATES, HE'S LIKELY TO STAY
THAT WAY FOR HOURS!

THAT'S TOO BAD! I WAS GOIN
TO TALK TO HIM! SPOKE YOU
TELL ME WHAT YOU KNOW
ABOUT THE SHOOTIN'!



AIN'T MUCH! HE'N' JOCKO WAS MOOVIN' ALONG!
NORTH O' THE RISS' ENJOVIN' THE MOONLIGHT

NEVER MIND ALL THAT! DO
YOU SEE WHO SHOT BOB?



NOPE! HEEDS SHOTS! NIGHT LILLED IT THAT
JAWY! SEEN RIDER! BLACK HOSS
SKEADDLIN' INTO THE WOODS!



FOUND WRENK! TENDED HIM ALL NIGHT! COLE
CAME UP THE TRAIL JUST AFTER SUNUP!
HE TUK OVER!



I WONDER HOW COLE
HAPPENED TO BE UP
THERE SO EARLY
IN THE MORNING

LOOKIN' FOR THE
SHERIFFS! LEASTWAYS
SAID SO!



AN' IT WASN'T NO LIE, YOU BAWD-OFF OLD
SOURDOUGH! I WAS ON THE PROWL ALL
NIGHT TRYIN' TO PICK UP HIS TRAIL!















LATE THAT AFTERNOON...

YORRER'S DEVIL'S PASS, ALTRY!
HIDE SHACK IS UP THE NORTH
SIDE NEAR THE CREST!

BLACK CLOUDS THERE,
TOO!



ALRIVE WE CAN REACH SHELTER BEFORE
THE STORM BREAKS!

TOO LATE, GENE!
ALREADY BUSTED!



WATCH! STORM'S HERE, GENE!
AIN'T HE IN THE SHACK!

I GOT A PLAN!
I'LL RIDE ON TO
HIDE, AN' PRETEND
I GOT LOST IN THE
STORM!



THAT WAY I CAN GET INSIDE
AN LOOK AROUND WITHOUT
ROUSIN' HER SUSPICIONS!



WHAT ABOUT US, ALTRY?

FOLLOW ME IN FIVE
MINUTES! SHOW YOURSELVES
IF YOU HEAR SHOOTIN'!



GONNA SEEM LONG!
WITH IN THE RAIN!

GET SUEY LOOKIN'
FOR THE BANK
CASH, THEN! IF
THE NIGHT RIDER'S THERE
...AN' I'M SURE HE IS -
THE LOOT'S THERE, TOO!



MEANTIME, IT WAS SHACK...

WHERE YUH BEEN SO LONG,
HAG? I FIGGERED THE
LAW GRABBED YUH!

THE STORM HELD
ME UP, RID! IT'S
TURBIDLE WET
OUTSIDE!











The two men faced each other grimly. Thad Kane sat easily on his black horse, his thin lips hard, his narrowed eyes cold. Jim Lewis stood on the sun-baked earth of the ranch yard, his lean face pale under its tan as he looked up at the other man.

"You've got till noon tomorrow to hand over the one thousand dollars cash you owe me, Lewis," Thad Kane's voice was as cold as his eyes. "At one minute past noon my boys'll be headed out here to take over this spread."

Kane swung the huge, black stallion around and a mirthless smile curved his thin lips. "Why don't you ask your wife for the cash, Jim?" he asked. "She's got plenty."

"You leave my wife outa this!" Now Jim's pale cheeks were flushed with anger.

"Okay," Kane nodded. "That's your business. But you oughta know better'n to play poker with me, Jim!"

"I didn't play poker with you, and you know I didn't!" Jim's voice was hoarse.

"I've got a heap of witnesses."

"Sure! All your hired gun slingers, paid to swear to your lies!"

Kane sneered. "I suppose you weren't even in the Eldorado the other night."

"I was there, all right," Jim admitted. "I went in to get a bite to eat! You doped my coffee, Kane! Then, while I was out cold, you framed this phony poker loss to get hold of my ranch. You've wanted this spread for a long time."

"Sure I have! An' if you'd been smart, you'd have sold it to me. Now I

get the ranch, an' you get nothin', unless Jed Casey's ghost helps you out." Kane's glance flashed past Jim to a low, round hill rising back of the ranch house. Then he spurred his horse out of the yard.

When distance had swallowed the black horse, Jim turned to stare at the low hill topped by two mesquite trees. According to legend, Jed Casey's ghost rode up there when the moon was full. Most folks said the ghost was hunting for the gold Jed had been carrying the night the Newlin brothers dry-gulched him. Others declared the ghost was trying to lead someone to the spot where the Newlins had hidden Jed's gold before the law caught up with them. Jed had left no survivors so the gold would belong to its finder! Jim had searched the hill many times but had never turned up anything remotely resembling a gold piece. Everyone had laughed at him, including his own wife, Lucy.

He heard the screen door squeak and turned to face Lucy. One look told him that she had heard everything.

"Reckon you'd better start packin', honey," he said. "This ranch isn't goin' to be a very safe place from now on."

She came close to him, put her hand on his arm. "You know I won't go away and leave you to face this alone, Jim. If you'd only use some of my money."

"No, Lucy. When your pa accused me of marryin' you for yore cash, I swore I'd never touch a cent of it. I'd rather go down before Kane's bullets than take your money!"

Lucy's lip quivered. "You're mighty stubborn, Jim, but I guess I understand. Can't the law do anything to Kane?"

"No. It's plumb hopeless, unless . . ." His eyes turned toward the low, round hill . . . "unless Jed Casey's ghost turns up the gold for me!" He looked back at her. "Now I think I'll take a little ride around the ranch for the last—"

"Don't say it, Jim," she broke in. "Just go on and take your ride. I'll be waiting for you."

All afternoon he rode slowly around his ranch. It was night when, at last, he turned toward the low, round hill and the mesquite trees, and they were bathed in the light of the full moon. He was nearing the slope when he heard a horse's hoofs. A moment later, he saw the rider. The man was headed for the hill and he was riding a dun-colored mustang! Jed Casey's ghost was supposed to ride that kind of a horse.

For a moment, Jim sat silently, his body tense. Then he urged Ginger forward. But, as Ginger's pace increased, so did that of the dun horse. When Jim reached the foot of the hill, the strange rider was disappearing over the crest, and the hoofbeats seemed to stop. Jim kept on up the hill. He knew that he had not imagined that rider!

But, when he reached the hilltop, there was no sign of the horseman. He slid from the saddle and began to search the ground for tracks. He circled the mesquite trees slowly. Suddenly he stumbled over a large, flat rock hidden in a patch of shadow. The impact shifted the rock. And, in the moonlight, he saw the glint of metal!

He bent and with shaking fingers he picked up a twenty-dollar gold piece. In a daze, he lifted the rock. Under it lay a pair of rotted saddlebags. Through the shredded leather, Jim saw more of the golden coins. He had found Jed Casey's gold!

When Jim burst into the house a short time later, Lucy was sitting by the fire, wrapped in a long, full dressing gown.

"Look, honey!" he shouted, running to her. "I found Casey's gold! There must be a couple thousand dollars in these saddlebags!"

Lucy's eyes widened as he spilled

gold pieces into her lap. "Jim! Where did you—"

"I found it up under the mesquite trees. It's a miracle, Lucy! First, I'll pay off Kane. Then I'll spread the word that I'll pay plenty for the truth about that phony poker game. Somebody'll talk if they know there's cash in it for 'em!" He took her hands and pulled her to her feet.

Suddenly his voice trailed away and his laughter died. He was staring at Lucy. Her dressing gown had parted, disclosing the riding boots and jeans she was wearing under the robe.

"Lucy!" Jim's voice was harsh. "It was you, ridin' that dun-colored horse! You put that gold up there to trick me!"

Lucy shook her head. "You're half right, Jim," she said slowly. "I WAS the rider you saw and I was going to put a thousand dollars in gold on the hill where you would find it. I got the money from the bank this afternoon. But I didn't have time to hide my gold because you and Ginger came too soon. What you found was really Jed Casey's hidden gold."

"I don't believe that story, Lucy," Jim began. "You're only trying to make it easy for me."

"Wait, Jim," Lucy smiled. She turned and took a full money bag from the wall closet.

When Lucy opened the bag and Jim saw the gold pieces inside, he could not speak. He could only smile, but Lucy understood.



LUCKY

RIVERDALE

"YOU'RE TAKIN' A BIG CHANCE, JERRY! SPOON! SOME CROOK GETS WISE YOU'RE TOTIN' THE GOLD!"

"NOW COULD HE? ONLY FOUR PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT IT... YOU, ME, OAK, AND GUS HOGAN, THE WELLS-FARGO MAN IN CASA GRANDE!"

YOUNG JERRY RAKER AND THE STATION MASTER CARRY A STICKED BOX TO JERRY'S HOUSE. THEY DO NOT SEE THE LURKING SHYDERDOWNER, PREPARED

"WAL, WHOEVER'S BEEN PULLIN' ALL THE ROBBRIES 'ROUND HERE LATELY ALLUS SEEMS T' KNOW WHERE T' STICK AN WHEN!"

"MAYBE I CAN HELP GUS HAN HIM! I'LEARNED SOME NEW TRICKS BACK EAST ABOUT CATCHING CROOKS!"

"ANY NOTION 'NIM BEAT A SIX MAN, JERRY? BETTER KEEP YOUR HANDS 'N' 'NIM 'NIM I' FERGOT HOW T' USE IT!"

"DON'T WORRY! I CAN STILL SHOOT THE BUTTORS OFF A VEST AT FIFTY FEET!"

"BY CUFFIN' CROOK-COUNTRY, I'LL BEAT THAT WAGON TO CASA GRANDE EASY! THE BOSS OUGHTA BE REAL GLAD TO HEAR MY NEWS!"











THE COWBOY'S
CLOTHES . .

CONTINUED
FROM INSIDE
FRONT COVER.

HIS CHAPS ... A SHORT NAME
FOR CHAPARRALS ... ARE MADE
OF HEAVY LEATHER TO PROTECT
HIS LEGS FROM THE THICK
UNDERBUSH AND THE THORNY
CACTUS. THEIR FLARING WIDTH
ALSO SHIELDS THE SIDES OF
HIS HORSE.

HIS BOOTS ARE LACELESS
SO THEY CAN BE DRAWN
ON QUICKLY. THE POINTED
TOE GUIDES THE FOOT
INTO THE STIRRUP.
THE HIGH HEEL PREVENTS
HIS FOOT FROM SLIPPING
THROUGH THE STIRRUP.
THESE SAME HIGH HEELS
CAN BE DUNE DEEP INTO
THE GROUND TO GIVE A
FIRM FOOTING, WHEN
HE IS ROPING HORSES
OR OTHER ANIMALS.



